

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01

AID-20 OMB-01 PC-04 DRC-01 /175 W

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R 212115Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9298

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTO DOMINGO 4771

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT

SUBJECT: PENA GOMEZ AND THE PRD

REF: A) SD 4748; B) SD 4770

1. EX-SECRETARY GENERAL DR. JOSE FRANCISCO PENA GOMEZ MADE THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ABOUT THE EVOLVING CRISIS IN THE "PARTIDO REVOLUCIONARIO DOMINICANO" (PRD) ON NOV 20 TO AN EMBOFF WHILE THE TWO (PENA AND EMBOFF) WERE VISITING SACHA VOLMAN WHO HAS BEEN HOSPITALIZED WITH A BLEEDING ULCER:

A. HE (PENA) AND HIS FOLLOWERS CONTROL ALL OF THE MUNICIPAL COMMITTEES IN THE COUNTRY WITH THE EXCEPTION OF LA VEGA AND SAN FRANCISCO DE MACORIS. IN ADDITION, THEY CONTROL 12 OF THE 19 PRD ZONE LEVEL COMMITTEES IN THE CAPITAL. MOREOVER, 16 OF THE 22 REMAINING MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (CEN) ARE OPPOSED TO BOSCH. HE EXPLAINED THAT BOSCH UNDERSTOOD THE SITUATION, I.E., THAT HE HAD LOST CONTROL OF THE PARTY, AND FOR THIS REASON, HE COULD NOT AND WOULD NOT RETURN TO THE PRD. PENA NOTED THAT BOSCH WAS UNWILLING TO PARTICIPATE IN ANYTHING HE DID NOT DOMINATE.

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B. PENA CLAIMED THAT BOSCH'S NEW PARTY, THE "PARTIDO DE LA LIBERACION DOMINICANA" (PLD), WOULD ATTRACT PERHAPS 40 PERCENT OF THE PRD MEMBERSHIP SIMPLY BECAUSE IT HAD BOSCH AS ITS PRESIDENT. ITS GREATEST STRENGTH WOULD BE AT THE UNIVERSITY AND THE SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL. IT WOULD HAVE, HOWEVER, FEW FOLLOWERS AMONG THE PRD LABOR UNIONS WHICH WERE SOLIDLY BEHIND PENA.

C. COMMENTING ON THE FUTURE OF THE PRD, PENA SAID THAT THE PARTY WOULD LEAVE THE OPPOSITION UNITY TALKS AS THESE WERE A WASTE OF TIME; BALAGUER COULD NOT BE DEFEATED IN THE 1974 ELECTIONS AND THERE WAS, THEREFORE, NO REASON TO WORK TOWARD OPPOSITION UNITY. A PENA-LED PRD WOULD INSTEAD CONCENTRATE ON REORGANIZING ITSELF AT THE BASE LEVEL TO COUNTERACT THE LOSSES IT HAD SUFFERED WHEN BOSCH FORMED HIS NEW PARTY.

D. TURING TO THE IDEOLOGY OF THE PARTY, PENA BELIEVED THAT BOTH THE NEW PLD AND THE PRD WOULD ADHERE TO THE POLICIES PROPOSED BY BOSCH AS THE BASIS FOR A "GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL DIGNITY." BOSCH'S WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PRD WAS NOT AN IDEOLOGICAL QUESTION, SAID PENA. COMMENT: PENA PROBABLY WILL BE PERSUADED TO TAKE OVER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE PRD BY THE ANTI-BOSCH ELEMENTS WHO HAVE REMAINED IN THE PARTY. THEREFORE, HIS ESTIMATE OF THE PRD'S STRENGTH VIS--A-VIS THE PLD IS QUESTIONABLE. SHOULD HE LEAD THE PRD, HE WILL HAVE CONSIDERABLE AUTHORITY, BUT NOTHING LIKE THAT OF THE AUTOCRATIC BOSCH. PENA WILL IN FACT BE FIRST AMONG EQUALS, AT LEAST AT THE OUTSET. BECAUSE OF THIS INITIAL LIMITATION OF HIS POWERS, HIS PRESENT PLANS FOR THE PRD ARE NOT NECESSARILY GOSPEL, E.G., HIS DECISION TO WITHDRAW THE PARTY FROM THE OPPOSITION UNITY TALKS MAY BE RESISTED BY THE OTHER PRD LEADERS. MOREOVER, HIS DISINCLINATION TO GO TO ELECTIONS IN 1974 WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE CHALLENGED BY MANY PARTY LEADERS, SOME OF WHOM ARE VERY ANXIOUS FOR THE PARTY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ELECTIONS SO THAT THEY CAN BECOME OFFICE HOLDERS.

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